

Text—Codex—Library

The *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* between Institutional Practices and Literary History

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1. Libraries as Infrastructures of Knowledge

Libraries are commonly regarded as places where books are collected and made available for public use. But libraries are more than just collections of books; they are, as Andreas Speer puts it, spaces of thought and institutions of organised knowledge, spaces for thinking and orders of knowledge.¹ In libraries knowledge is not only collected but also organised, structured and—in doing so—constituted at the same time.² Therefore, I understand libraries not only as repositories of texts but as places where texts are constituted as objects of knowledge both through material practices and through gestures of virtualisation.³ Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge that the role of libraries is not confined to mere collections; they also function as institutions that facilitate the transfer of media. This process of transfer can be illustrated by the evolution of media from parchment to paper, from manuscripts to printed materials, and ultimately to digital formats. Such ›transcriptive‹ processes⁴ change the status of a text and affect its reception just as much as the descriptive library practices do. This raises the question of how and in what way libraries are involved in the constitution of texts as objects of knowledge.

1 »Räume des Denkens und Institutionen geordneten Wissens, Denkräume und Wissensordnungen«, Speer, Andreas (2020): »Die Bibliothek. Denkräume und Wissensordnungen«, in: id./Lars Reuke (eds.): *Die Bibliothek – The Library – La Bibliothèque*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, pp. XV–XXV, here p. XX.

2 Schlottheuber, Eva (2021): »Mittelalterliche Bibliotheken und (digitale) Wissensordnung. Zur Aktualität einer alten Forschungsfrage«, in: *Bibliothek. Forschung und Praxis* 45:2, pp. 221–229, here pp. 221–222.

3 On the virtualisation of texts see for example: Lévy, Pierre (1998), *Becoming Virtual. Reality in the Digital Age*, New York: Plenum Trade, esp. chapter 3 »The virtualization of Text«, pp. 45–64. The following explanation on libraries follows: Speer: *Die Bibliothek*, pp. XX–XXII.

4 Cf. Jäger, Ludwig (2002): »Transkriptivität. Zur medialen Logik der kulturellen Semantik«, in: id./Georg Stanitzek (eds.): *Transkribieren. Medien/Lektüre*, München: Fink, p. 19–41.

How and by what means do they co-determine what is perceived as a ›text‹ and how a text is categorised?

By posing such questions, I firstly follow considerations concerning the praxeology of literary studies, as for example recently discussed by Steffen Martus and Carlos Spoerhase.⁵ Secondly, I follow the suggestions by Michelle R. Warren, who, in her book *Holy Digital Grail*,⁶ traces the history of an Arthurian novel-manuscript over the course of its various historical media changes and transcriptions. In the present study, the unique transmission of the *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* by Könemann of Jerxheim is examined, along with its manuscript, the quarto-sized *Codex Manuscriptus Theologicus 153*. The paper manuscript, dating from the 15th century, is traced through various libraries and media infrastructures. The study also explores the practices of description and cataloguing, which serve for constituting their status as objects of knowledge.

2. A Codex in Brunswick

Prior to its acquisition by the Göttingen University Library, the 4° Cod. Ms. theol. 153⁷ had been in the possession of numerous other libraries. The earliest evidence pertaining to this manuscript leads to the private library of the Brunswick town clerk, Gerwin of Hameln. Anette Haucap-Naß considers his book collection as one of the most significant private libraries of 15th century Germany.⁸ The library contained a total of 336 volumes.⁹ Following Gerwin's demise in 1496, they were bequeathed to the *Andreana* in Brunswick, which was part of St. Andrew's Church. Gerwin's bequest stipulated that his collection be kept permanently in Brunswick and made accessi-

5 Cf. Martus, Steffen/Spoerhase, Carlos (2022): *Geistesarbeit. Eine Praxeologie der Geisteswissenschaften*, Berlin: Suhrkamp.

6 Cf. Warren, Michelle R. (2020): *Holy Digital Grail. A Medieval Book on the Internet*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

7 SUB Göttingen, 4° Cod. Ms. theol. 153. To avoid disrupting the reader's flow, the manuscript is abbreviated in the following as Cod. 153. In order to facilitate the identification of individual manuscripts in databases such as the ›Handschriftencensus‹ (www.handschriftencensus.de), the manuscript shelfmarks always include the German names of the institutions which hold them.

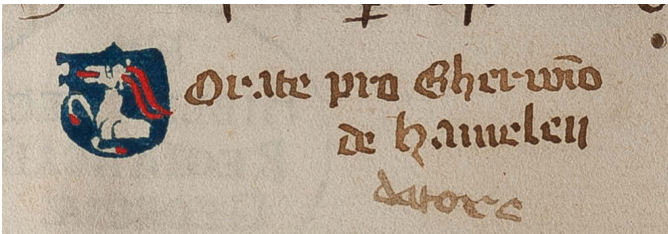
8 Haucap-Naß, Anette (1995): *Der Braunschweiger Stadtschreiber Gerwin von Hameln und seine Bibliothek*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, p. 1.

9 Lehmann, Paul (1935): »Gerwin van Hameln und die Andreasbibliothek in Braunschweig«, in: *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 52:11, pp. 565–586, here pp. 570–571; Haucap-Naß: *Der Braunschweiger Stadtschreiber Gerwin*, pp. 1 and 140. A transcription of Gerwin's testament (written in Low German) can be found: *Ibid.*, appendix 3, pp. 295–301.

ble to experts.¹⁰ The fact that Cod. 153 belonged to Gerwin's collection can be verified with some certainty:

Gerwin labelled all his manuscripts and incunabula on the first page with his family crest—a red-horned, silver ibex on a blue ground—next to which the prayer petition *Orate pro Gherwino de Hamelen* can be found. Both elements can be found in Cod. 153. Here, the family crest and prayer petition were supplemented by a later hand with *datore*—a donation record (Fig. 1). The codex, marked by Gerwin as an object of personal and family memory, hence becomes part of a hybrid collection of objects from various donors in the *Andreana*.

Fig. 1: Family crest, prayer petition and donation record.



Since the family crest can only be found at the commencement of Cod. 153, it may be assumed that the manuscript, which consists of two fascicles—a Latin part from fol. 1–158 and a Low German part from fol. 159–220—, had already been bound prior to its acquisition by Gerwin, or alternatively, that its components were bound by Gerwin immediately after. The fact that the two parts of the manuscript, i.e. the Latin and the vernacular part, were originally independent is shown by the staining seen on fol. 1r as well as on fol. 159r (the beginning of the *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*). This suggests that once both parts must have been stored independently and unbound.¹¹

The practice of binding, which places a text within a certain context and provides a framework for the way in which it is understood by placing it among its co-transmission, cannot be dated, but it can be proven in principle. The context within which the text is placed corresponds to the profile of Gerwin's library. According to Haucap-Naß, it not only reflected Gerwin's personal reading interests, which included theological literature such as sermons or texts on current theological debates, legal literature, medical writings, historiographical works, and scholastic literature.¹² But

10 Ibid., p. 140.

11 Breucker, Fritz (1904): »Gedichte Brunos von Schonebeck«, in: Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung/Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch 30, pp. 81–146, here p. 81.

12 Ibid. (and in detail), pp. 132–136.

also the »Wunsch nach umfassender Bildungsmöglichkeit«¹³ (desire for comprehensive education) was the determining factor for Gerwin's interest in the collection, and the library can therefore be categorised as a »Gebrauchsbibliothek«¹⁴ (reference library), which included the following topical categories:¹⁵

- a) Religious/Theological literature
- b) Conciliar literature
- c) Legal literature
- d) Historiography
- e) Grammars and dictionaries
- f) Ancient authors (especially those who were important for humanist education)
- g) Medicine and astrology
- h) Humanist authors (such as Petrarch, Barbaro and Albrecht of Eyb)

Only eight out of the 359 texts from Gerwin's library which are known today are in vernacular language.¹⁶ These are primarily medical recipes, documents, legal writings, and (geo)political reports. Könemann's *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*, Brun of Schönebeck's *Ave Maria* excerpt (the *Theophilus* legend) and the other following vernacular texts in Cod. 153 as well as a bound maculation containing a part of the Middle High German *Graf Rudolf* are the only known evidence of vernacular poetry in this collection. Haucap-Naß therefore concludes that Gerwin had no particular interest in literary texts and that the transmission of the *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* and the texts following it should be regarded merely coincidental—as a »by-catch«.¹⁷

The codex, which in its Latin part includes religious/theological works as well as texts related to the Council of Basel and sermons, probably came into Gerwin's possession because of its topical profile. Personal interest may also serve as an explanation because of the existence of written traces of Gerwin himself. His handwriting is known from his autographs, for example his last will, and therefore it can be identified with certainty by palaeographical means.¹⁸ Therefore, his marginal notes, annotations and headings can be found in most manuscripts of his collection; in Cod. 153, however, they can only be found in the Latin, but not in the vernacular layers of the volume.¹⁹ Gerwin's notes assign addressable names and titles to the texts. Furthermore, they introduce the distinction between unread and read texts and mark

13 Ibid., p. 137.

14 Ibid., p. 130.

15 The topical categories were taken from: Ibid., pp. 102–124.

16 Haucap-Naß: Der Braunschweiger Stadtschreiber Gerwin, pp. 100–101.

17 Ibid., pp. 125–129.

18 Ibid., p. 132.

19 Ibid., pp. 1 and 132.

texts that are to be read—such as in: »*Evangeli[um] Nichodemi legi* [ChrK]« (Cod. 153, fol. 86r). A total of 16 traces of Gerwin's hand can be found in Cod. 153:²⁰

- a) fol. 2r: Family crest, prayer petition and a »[q]uerseitige Unterschnittbeschriftung *theologia*...«²¹.
- b) fol. 2r: *autoritates biblie ad decretum* (1.)
- c) fol. 31rv: *proverbia*
- d) fol. 32r: *Salomonis*
- e) fol. 41v: *Machabeorum*
- f) fol. 81r: *expliciunt concordantie biblie cum decreto*
- g) fol. 82r: *de materia successionum* (3.)
- h) fol. 86r: *evangelium Nichodemo legi* (4.)
- i) fol. 97v: *legi*
- j) fol. 112r: *exlicit sermo Jo(hannis) de Zago(via)* (5.)
- k) fol. 113r: *lectura circa arbores* (6.)
- l) fol. 130r: *disputatio de conceptione beate Marie* (7.)
- m) fol. 147v: *explicit disputacio de conceptione Marie*
- n) fol. 148r: *bullae de translacione concilii legi* (8.)
- o) fol. 155v: *legi*
- p) fol. 156r: *de collacione bonorum* (9.)

The labelling on the tail edge of the book *theologia* not only indicates which way round the book may have been on its shelf in the library but also assigns a topical heading and a librarian classification to the text collection. It provides the keyword ›theology‹ under which Gerwin subsumed the content of the manuscript and topically located it in his library. Considering the texts preserved in the codex, such a classification/categorisation is reasonable, and the current Göttingen shelfmark *Codex Manuscriptus Theologicus 153* once again takes up the keyword *theology*.

In addition to Gerwin's notes, there are traces of at least one other hand in both the Latin and the vernacular fascicles of the codex. Unlike Gerwin, this user is

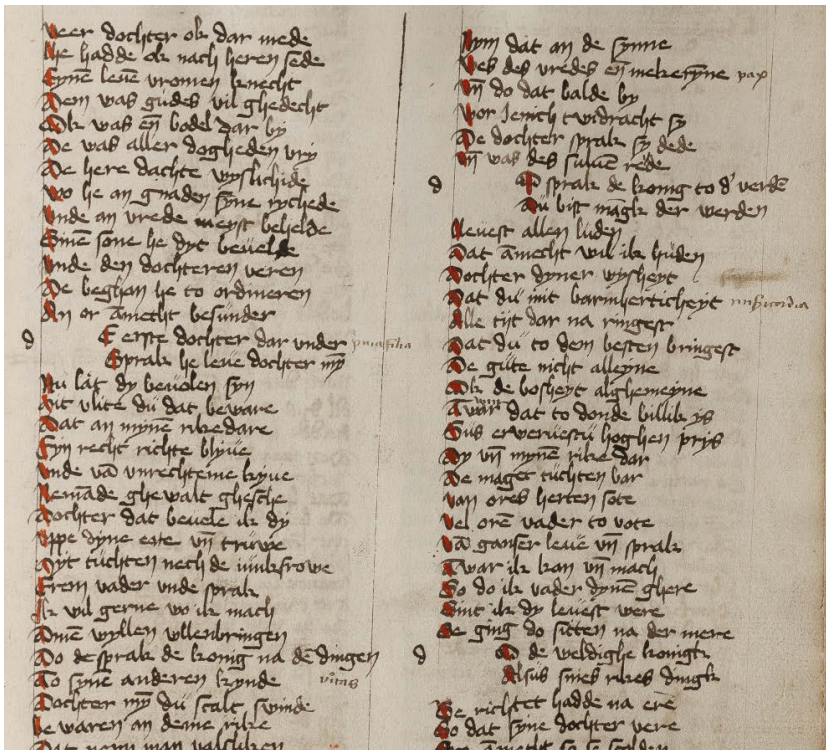
20 The list of Gerwin's traces was taken from the manuscript description of Cod. 153 in: id., pp. 183–185, a list of Gerwin's traces can be found on pp. 184–185. The Arabic numbers in brackets indicate the position of the text within Cod. 153, i.e. (1.) means the first text of the manuscript. The counting follows Haucap-Naß, although she does not consider the pre-attached letter and the notes on inheritance law in her counting of the texts.

21 Ibid., p. 184. The categorization *theologia* is followed by a hardly readable word indicated by Haucap-Naß by the three dots (ibid.) that might be a second (sub-)classification. Fritz Breucker assumes the Latin word »*jus*« (Breucker: *Gedichte Brunos von Schonebeck*, p. 81), meaning ›law‹, ›right‹. Considering the texts on the Council of Basel or the notes on inheritance law in Cod. 153—although it is uncertain when these were written down—, such a (sub-)classification is reasonable.

not content with inserting (sub)headings and marking texts as having been read. In fact, structuring marginal notes, annotations, highlightings, maniculæ, even corrections etc. were left in the texts.

Such interventions can also be found in *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*: Verses were added in places where the rhyme scheme is broken, and corrections were made where scribal errors were suspected.²² Furthermore, glosses in Latin were added to the text, for example to mark the first appearance of a particular figure. Fig. 2 shows where this hand highlights the four daughters of God by adding their Latin names »[ver]itas«, »pax«, and »mi[ser]icordia« or by giving them a reference number »[pri]ma filia« (Cod. 153, fol. 160r). Moreover, the beginnings of interesting passages were also marked with glosses in Latin which are additionally emphasised by lines next to the body of the text (fol. 194rb-195ra, 195va, 202rb, and 202v).

Fig. 2: Marking of the first appearance of the different daughters in Könemann's *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*.



22 These can be found e.g. on fol. 194rb to 195ra, 195va, 202rb, and 202v.

Such interventions show that this hand reshaped *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* according to aesthetic considerations—e.g. to avoid orphaned rhymes—as well as regarding its own reading interests. The corrections and the addition of verses in places where the rhyme scheme is interrupted, as well as the Latin glosses, establish a new, smoothed textual structure to the poem and change its textuality. This altered version of Könemann's poem is finally given a title by the Latin heading *Viridari[um] b[ea]te [vir]ginis* (fol. 159r), meaning ›Garden of the Blessed Virgin‹, a translation of the vernacular, metaphorical title mentioned in the epilogue (Fig. 3 and 4).²³ This title makes this version of the text addressable and distinguishable from the first-hand *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* (and that necessarily means the first hand of the manuscript). Although Könemann also mentions himself by name in the epilogue (fol. 210ra), his name is not noted above the text. But the Latin title with its keyword of ›*Viridarium*‹ does not only translate the metaphor of picking rhetorical flowers (*flores*) but also refers to a specific textual practice and text genre well established in the world of Latin script. It emphasises the Latin quotations in the text—the necessarily anonymous excerpt character of the poetry—or, to be more precise, of the poems in the second fascicle as a whole.²⁴ *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* as well as the texts following it in Cod. 153 may be considered a ›*Viridarium*‹. They share the same Mariological subject, and they all carry Latin quotations. Hence, they are indeed a ›*Viridarium*‹ of the virgin, and this ›*Viridarium*‹ responds to the Mariological sermons of the first part of the manuscript by surrounding the Latin quotations in praise of Mary with vernacular poetic texts.²⁵

23 The epilogue says: »Dú lefer scalt dat weten / Dúffe breff scalt heten / S[un]te marien wortegarde / Dar scalt de vnghelarde / Spacieren gan yñne / Mit vornúft finer fýnne / V[nde] mang den wort en / Sine ftunde korten / V[nde] blom[en] lefen / Dat scalt ghenftliken wesen« (Cod. 153, fol. 210rb).

24 Lechtermann, Christina (2025): »Könemanns von Jerxheim *Sunte Marien wortegarde*«, in: Franz-Josef Holznagel/Jan Cölln in cooperation with Ricarda Bauschke-Hartung and Mathias Herweg (eds.): *Wolfram-Studien XXVII. Literatur im mittelniederdeutschen Sprachraum (1200–1600). Produktion und Rezeption Rostocker Kolloquium 2021*, Berlin: Erich Schmidt, pp. 315–348.

25 The first Mariological sermon starts with a quote from the Biblical *Canticum canticorum* (Song 4.7)—»(T)ota pulcra est amica mea et macula n[on] est inte« (fol. 130r)—and can be found on fol. 130r–137r. The second one, beginning with »(S)apiencia aperuit ora«, a quote from the Biblical *Book of Wisdom* (Sap 10, 21), can be found on fol. 137r–147v. Both sermons are titled »*Disp[utacio] de Concep[cione] b[ea]te Marie*« (Cod. 153, fol. 130r). In the sermons—just as in Könemann's *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*—many Latin quotations can be found.

Fig. 3: Latin heading »Viridari[um] b[ea]t[is] [vir]ginis« at the beginning of Sunte Marien Wortgarde.

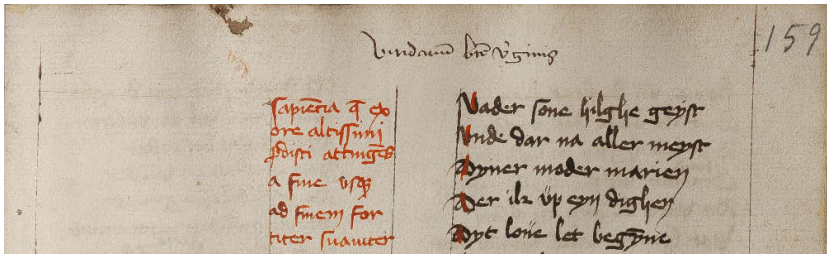
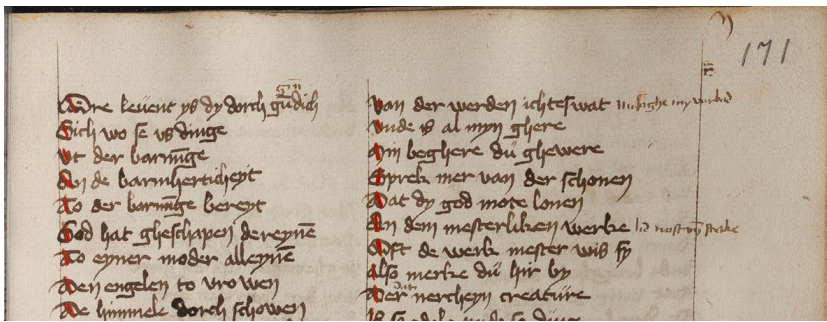


Fig. 4: Correction and added verses in Sunte Marien Wortgarde.



3. From Brunswick to Helmstedt

In a letter addressed to Rudolf August, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, Hermann von der Hardt, a Helmstedt theologian, stated the following during a research visit to the Andreana at the conclusion of the 17th century: »Uti nos his diebus in sacra nostra aede inter multas chartas laceras et vetustate detritas codicesque ante plura saecula scriptos haud contemnenda offendimus monumenta«²⁶. Based on this statement, Paul Lehmann concludes that von der Hardt had already recognised the gradual disintegration of the Andreana and therefore took care that some of the books were transferred to the library of Duke Rudolf August and later donated to the Helmstedt University Library. Furthermore, several books were also transferred to von der Hardt's private library,

26 Taken from: Lehmann: Gerwin van Hameln, p. 575; Translation (ChrK): »As in these days, among many torn papers and volumes worn down by age, written many centuries ago, we have encountered not insignificant monuments in our sacred building.«

including the Cod. 153²⁷—presumably for his personal research. Lehmann's hypothesis is that von der Hardt travelled to Brunswick with the intention of conducting research on the Council of Constance and the Council of Basel.²⁸ Cod. 153 contains some texts connected to these events. A letter addressed to an unknown recipient and dated 11 October 1736 is bound in at the beginning of the codex (fol. Ir-Iir). This finding serves for substantiating the hypothesis that previously the codex was part of von der Hardt's library. In this letter, a certain *Jac[ob] Chr[istian] Hersenius* thanks the recipient for having been given the manuscript and thus »*Viridarium illud Kone-mannianum B. Mariæ / Virginis*« (Cod. 153, fol. Ir).

Not only did Hersenius read Könemann's *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*, but he also copied it. The original copy was part of the »Gymnasialbibliothek« collection in Salzwedel.²⁹ Presently, it is part of the holdings of the Berlin State Library.³⁰ In the preface to this copy of *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* Hersenius states that his source is a 15th century manuscript that belonged to the library of the »*Praepos-/siti Mariaeber-gensis, Hermann von der Hardt* [emphasis in original]« in Helmstedt in 1736.³¹ In his copy (Fig. 5) Hersenius isolates the texts of the second fascicle from the composite manuscript. He transcribes both the German and the Latin text elements while normalising and expanding the abbreviations. However, he only counts the German verses on the margins of each respective column. In Hersenius' transcription, *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* appears as a numerical quantity whose components can be addressed individually. The vernacular text is now conceived as a coherent entity

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- 27 Herbst, Hermann (1941): »Die Bibliothek der St. Andreaskirche zu Braunschweig«, in: Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen 58:9/10, pp. 301–338, here p. 336. It is not possible to determine with certainty which books exactly were involved, due to the absence of a catalogue of the books that were removed from the *Andreana*.
- 28 Cf. Lehmann: Gerwin van Hameln, p. 575. The fact that von der Hardt was doing research on the Council of Basel is evident from the course catalogue for the 1730/31 semester: »*Hermann von der Hardt caliginosa feculi XV. monumenta perscrutatur in magni Bafilienfis concilii lucem*« (Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv-Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, StAWF 23 Alt 4023, *Catalogus Lectionum et exercitationum quae proximo semestri a festo Michaelis anni MDCCCXXX. Vsque ad festum Paschatos Anni MDCCCXXI. In Academia Iulia habebuntur*. Helmstedt 1730, fol. 3v, online: <http://diglib.hab.de/periodica/ed000004-ws1730-1731/start.htm?image=00005> (last access: 09.09.2024)). Translation (ChrK.): »Hermannus von der Hardt investigates the obscure monuments of the 15th century in the light of the great Council of Basel.«
- 29 Borchling, Conrad (1899): »Mittelniederdeutsche Handschriften in Norddeutschland und den Niederlanden«, in: Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Geschäftliche Mittheilungen 1898:2, pp. 79–316, on Hersenius' copy of the *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* see pp. 190–191.
- 30 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. germ. fol. 1229, online: <https://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SB00035E3F00000000> (last access: 13.10.2025).
- 31 Ms. germ. fol. 1229, fol. 1v; Translation (ChrK.): »Provost of Mariaberg, Hermann von der Hardt.«

with the Latin elements added to it. Hersenius's primary interest lies in the Middle Low German dialect, and consequently his examination of the vernacular text is conducted from a philological perspective. Here, individual words are underlined and sometimes explained (in Latin). Although this first philological doppelgänger of *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* arises from a decidedly material practice, a gesture of virtualisation is inherent in it: more precisely, it makes a decision concerning main text and addition, thereby creating a version of Könemann's poem that did not historically exist in this way, yet one that will nonetheless shape both subsequent editions and accounts of literary history.³²

Conrad Borchling has identified a second manuscript from the 18th century (Hanover, Landesbibliothek. Ms. IV 483) that contains *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*—or at least parts of it.³³ According to Borchling, the manuscript consists of copies of older German texts from the 9th to 15th centuries, which were written by Johann Georg Eccard³⁴. The manuscript under scrutiny comprises excerpts and commentary on Könemann's poem, arranged on a single folio sheet, with Borchling failing

32 See for example: Ehrismann, Gustav (1935): *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters*, Vol. II/2, München: C.H. Beck, pp. 678–679; Cordes, Gerhard (1960): »Alt- und Mittelniederdeutsche Literatur«, in: Wolfgang Stammer (ed.): *Deutsche Philologie im Aufriß*, 2nd, revised ed., Vol. II, Berlin: Erich Schmidt, col. 2473–2519, part. col. 2484–2486; Halbach, Kurt Herbert: »Epik des Mittelalters«, in: Wolfgang Stammer (ed.): *Deutsche Philologie im Aufriß*, 2nd, revised ed., Vol. II, col. 397–684, here 663; Wolff, Ludwig (1980): Art. »Pfalfe Konemann (Könemann)«, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 12, pp. 484–485. Online: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd172511461.html#ndbcontent> (last access: 07.11.2025); Beckers, Hartmut (1985): Art. »Könemann von Jerxheim«, in: Kurt Ruh et al. (eds.): *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon* 5, Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, col. 64–68; Bumke, Joachim (2004): *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im hohen Mittelalter*, 5th ed., München: DTV, pp. 383–384; Jonta, Johannes (2004): »Orientierung durch volkssprachige Schriftlichkeit (1280/90–1380/90)«, in: Joachim Heinzle (ed.): *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit*, Vol. III/1, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, p. 274; Müller, Mario (2011): Art. »Könemann von Jerxheim«, in: Wolfgang Achnitz (ed.): *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon. Das Mittelalter*, Vol. I: *Das geistliche Schrifttum von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn des 14. Jahrhunderts*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, col. 1002–1004.

33 As an in-depth analysis of the manuscript is still pending, the information refers to: Conrad Borchling (1898): »Ueber mittelniederdeutsche Handschriften des nordwestlichen Deutschlands«, in: *Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung/Niederdeutsches Jahrbuch* 23 (1897), pp. 103–124, here p. 115.

34 On Johann Georg Eccard see for example: Wegele, Franz Xaver von (1877): Art. »Eccard, Johann Georg von«, in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 5, pp. 627–631. Online: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118958461.html#adbcontent> (last access: 07.11.2025) or Brill, Richard (1959): Art. »Eccard, Johann Georg von«, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 4, pp. 270–271. Online: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118958461.html#ndbcontent> (last access: 07.11.2025).

To date, the only printed edition of *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* was prepared by Ludwig Wolff in 1953. It maintains Hersenius' distinction between the actual vernacular text and the Latin additions.³⁵ Wolff as well understands the red Latin elements as additions that stand out from the black written vernacular text due to their colour and therefore could be skipped, if necessary, when reading *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*. Therefore, he shifted them, like the additions by a second hand, from the vernacular ›main text‹ into the apparatus. His objective is to present a ›cleansed‹ Low German text which he considers to be a later version of an ›original‹ *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*. Assuming that the ›actual‹ *Wurzgarten Mariens* must have been a Middle High German-Middle Low German hybrid version, Wolff interpreted Cod. 153 as evidence of a specific tendency towards Low German forms in the later Middle Ages.³⁶ In the wake of Gustav Roethe's 1899 assertion that a paradigm shift had occurred in the pre-eminence of Middle High German as a literary language in the late 13th century, Wolff's perspective elucidates the role of Low German forms, which had garnered Hersenius' interest, as a manifestation of this transformation.³⁷

The text transmitted uniquely in a 15th century manuscript now appears as a copy that is separated by several—albeit only deduced—intermediate stages from a text written in 1304. Furthermore, the text as a numerical order gains new relevance in Wolff's edition: Following the interpretation of Gustav Roethe that there had been a mix-up of individual layers in one of the intermediate manuscripts,³⁸ which the scribe of Cod. 153 had not noticed (or had noticed too late), thus mistakenly transposing some verses, Wolff rearranges parts of the text according to the presumably correct order. In the manuscript, the confession of man's guilt and repentance for his sins, and Christ's willingness to perform the work of redemption, are followed by a lengthy conversation between Divine Wisdom (*Sapiencia*) and Mercy (*Misericordia*), centred on the question of Mercy, where a woman can be found who can conceive the Son of God. Wisdom responds with lyrical praise of Mary, saying that she has already been found. It is then that the dispute between the four daughters of God finally begins, leading us back to the court assembly.

Although the (proto-)philological annotations and transcriptions by Hersenius and Wolff shape the text in different ways, thereby affecting its coherence and addressability, the descriptive practices of libraries focus on the creation of an authorial text: After the death of Hermann von der Hardt in 1746 his library was be-

35 Wolff, Ludwig (1953): *Die Dichtungen Könemanns. Kaland, Wurzgarten, Reimbibel*, Neumünster: Wachholtz; Könemann's *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* on pp. 125–306.

36 Wolff: »Einleitung«, in: id. (ed.): *Die Dichtungen Könemanns*, pp. 1–68.

37 Ibid., part. pp. 28–29; compare Roethe, Gustav (1899): *Die Reimvorreden des Sachsenspiegels*, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, esp. pp. 29–67, for Könemann's *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* pp. 33, 35–36, and 52–59.

38 Cf. C., »Ueber mittelniederdeutsche Handschriften des nordwestlichen Deutschlands«, p. 118, Ann. 1.

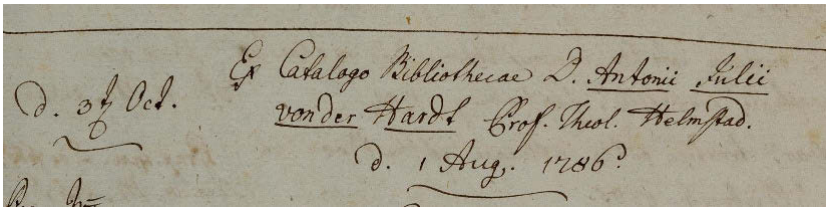
queathed to his nephew Anton Julius von der Hardt.³⁹ After Anton Julius von der Hardt had died, the library was auctioned off in 1786. On this occasion an auction catalogue was published by Paul Jakob Bruns.⁴⁰ This catalogue is a comprehensive index of all books, meticulously organised by language. Cod. 153 was categorised as a Latin manuscript. Furthermore, Bruns organizes the books according to their material (parchment and paper) and format and differentiates them regarding to their contents: manuscripts which mainly contain texts on the Councils of Constance and Basel, manuscripts from Hermann von der Hardt's personal collection on the Council of Basel, ›other‹ writings from the period before and after the 16th century.⁴¹ Cod. 153 is categorised as ›other‹ writings, although it contains texts on the Council of Basel. Hence, what might have particularly interested Hermann von der Hardt about the codex seems to be of secondary importance in the new description of the codex. Bruns' entry lists the texts it contains, using the headings added to the codex by Gerwin and the second hand. A reference to the ›german‹⁴² language and the ›actual‹ date of the composition of the text, February 1304, is added to the title *Sunte Marien Wortgarde*. The other vernacular texts, which lack headings, are simply referred to as »[a]liud poema similis argumenti ead[em]. lingua«⁴³. From this moment on, *Sunte Marien Wortgarde*, written down around the mid-15th century, is regarded as a text from 1304 in the library catalogues.

As indicated in the catalogue of acquisitions and donations of the Göttingen University Library, the library acquired Cod. 153, along with 70 other volumes, from von der Hardt's library and transferred it to its holdings on October 3rd, 1786.⁴⁴ The

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- 39 Cf. Mulzer, Martin (2019): Art. »von der Hardt, Hermann (1660–1746)«, in: WiBiLex, Online: <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/200104/> (last access: 02.07.2024), no page numbers. For further information on Anton Julius von der Hardt see e.g. Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst (2014): Professorenkatalog der Universität Helmstedt. Online: <http://uni-helmstedt.hab.de/index.php?cPage=5&sPage=prof&wWidth=1920&wHeight=957&suche1=gnd&pnd1=&muster1=116474734> (last access 03.07.2024).
- 40 Bruns, Paul Jacob (1786): *Catalogus Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii von der Hardt Abbatis Michaelsteinensis, Theologiae Et LL. OO. Professoris Publ. Ordin. ... Quae Codicibus Manuscriptis Et Libris Impressis ... Inter Quos Rarissimi Deprehenduntur, Constat In Aedibus b. Possessoris A. D. I August. Etc. Anni MDCCXXXVI Publica Auctionis Lege Dividendae*, Helmstedt: Schnorr. A digitised version of the catalogue can be accessed here: <http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?PPN646418793> (last access: 03.07.2024). In the catalogue, Cod. 153 can be found on pp. 27–28 no. 123.
- 41 Bruns, Paul Jacob: »Praefatio«, in: id.: *Catalogus Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii von der Hardt*, pp. Ir-IIv.
- 42 Bruns: *Catalogus Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii von der Hardt*, p. 28.
- 43 Ibid. Translation (ChrK): ›Another poem on a similar subject in the same language.‹
- 44 SUB Göttingen, Manual 1786. Online: <http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?DE-611-HS-3745123> (last access 03.07.2024), the new acquisitions from the library of Anton Julius von

first cataloguing from Göttingen focuses on the previous owner of the object (Fig. 5), who appears only incidentally in today's descriptions. Therefore, Cod. 153 is included into a list labelled »*Ex Catalogo Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii / von der Hardt Prof. Theol. Helmstad d. 1 Aug. 1786* [emphasis in original]«⁴⁵. Furthermore, a reference to the former owner can also be found in Cod. 153. In this manuscript, a hand that is very similar to the one that wrote the entry in the present Cod. 153 in the 1786 manuscript also left a provenance entry on fol. 1v: »*Ex Bibliotheca Ant[onius]. Iul[ius]. van der Hardt. d. Oct. 1786* [emphasis in original].«⁴⁶ In 1786 the reference to von der Hardt constituted the address for Cod. 153 and its texts (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: Heading on the new acquisitions of the Göttingen University Library from the holdings of Anton Julius von der Hardt.



Although this catalogue mainly focuses on von der Hardt, it also offers information regarding the size and format of Cod. 153. Today's quarto-sized Cod. 153 is described as a folio-sized manuscript (Fig. 7).⁴⁷ This indicates that it might have had another format by the time of acquisition and that the manuscript was trimmed and rebound shortly after its acquisition by the Göttingen University Library, as evidenced by the 18th century cardboard binding in which it is bound today.⁴⁸

der Hardt can be found on pp. 140–148, the 4^o Cod. Ms. theol. 153 p. 141 (with reference to the page and number of the auction catalogue by Bruns (»pag. 27 N^o 123.« (ibid., p. 141)).

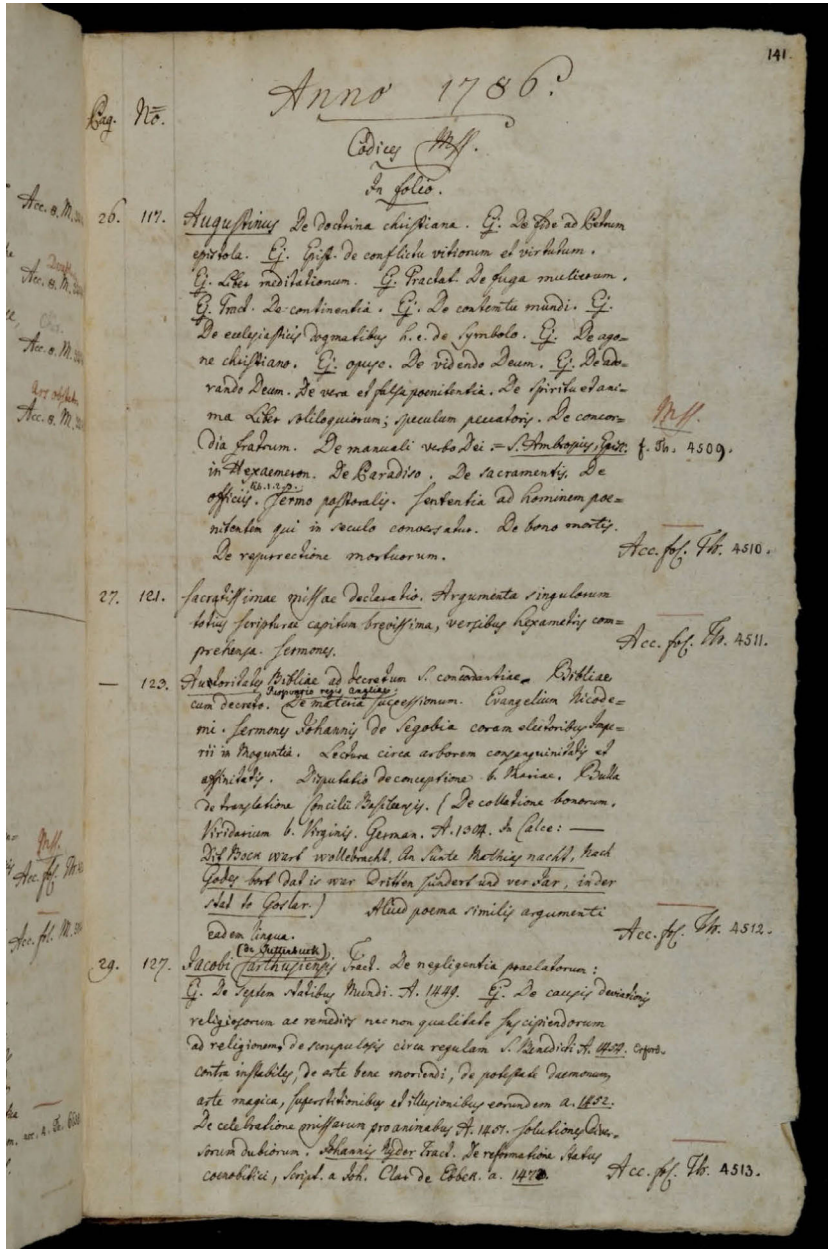
45 SUB Göttingen, Manual 1786, p. 140. Furthermore, a reference to the former owner can also be found in Cod. 153. In this manuscript, a hand that is very similar to the one that wrote the entry in the present Cod. 153 in the 1786 manuscript also left a provenance entry on fol. 1v: »*Ex Bibliotheca Ant[onius]. Iul[ius]. van der Hardt. d. Oct. 1786* [emphasis in original].«

46 Cod. 153, fol. 1v.

47 SUB Göttingen, Manual 1786, p. 141.

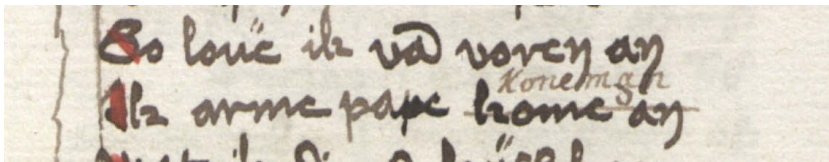
48 Haucap-Naß: Der Braunschweiger Stadtschreiber Gerwin, p. 185.

Fig. 7: Entry for today's quarto-sized Cod. 153 (no. 23) in a list of folio-sized manuscripts.



This characterisation of our Codex was changed in 1893, with the reorganisation and re-description of the Göttingen manuscripts by Wilhelm Meyer, who listed the manuscript under the shelfmark *Theol. 153*.⁴⁹ Meyer was the first to date the manuscript to the 15th century and to specify the Latin abbreviation »*german.*«⁵⁰ as late medieval Low German. Accordingly, Meyer lists the poem as *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* and names Könemann as the author: »Der Dichter nennt sich auf Bl. 195b und 210a.«⁵¹ While the name on fol. 210a is written by the very first hand of the manuscript, the author's name on fol. 195va is an addition by a later hand (Fig. 8)—probably by Hersenius and therefore dating back to the 18th century⁵²—, Meyer does not mention this in his description. However, this later addition is also part of what he perceives as the ›text‹ of *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*. In addition, stylistic features are now attributed to the poem that are consistent with this author.⁵³

Fig. 8: Later addition of the name *Koneman* perhaps by Hersenius.



In contrast to the auction catalogue by Bruns, the vernacular texts are now referred to at the beginning of the description and appear as essential parts of the manuscript. This also includes the texts categorised as »*aliud poema*«⁵⁴. They are not only given titles, but missing authors and parallel transmissions are also added where possible. While the texts that follow *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* are now being given their due in terms of literary history, insofar as they are understood as excerpts and testimonies of independent poems, the idea that the ›*Viridarium*‹

49 Meyer, Wilhelm (1893): *Die Handschriften in Göttingen*, Bd. 2: Universitäts-Bibliothek. Geschichte – Karten – Naturwissenschaften – Theologie – Handschriften aus Lüneburg, Berlin: A. Bath, the entry for *Theol. 153* is on pp. 383–385. The following explanations refer to this very description by Meyer.

50 Bruns: *Catalogus Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii von der Hardt*, p. 28.

51 Meyer: *Die Handschriften in Göttingen*, p. 384.

52 A comparison with the handwriting of the already mentioned letter by Jacob Christian Hersenius as well as the already discussed one from his copy of *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* shows that this addition of the name was made by Hersenius and therefore dates from the 18th century.

53 Meyer: *Die Handschriften in Göttingen*, p. 384: »Das Gedicht ist wie der ›Kaland‹ Konemann's in Abschnitte mit dreireimigem Schluss getheilt.«

54 Bruns: *Catalogus Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii von der Hardt*, p. 28.

and the excerpt section belong together, as seems to be implied by the phrase »*smilis argumenti ead[em]. lingua*«⁵⁵, is abandoned. Similarities and analogies between the vernacular texts of the second half of Cod. 153 are neglected in favour of differentiation, which takes the taxonomy of literary history into account.

Meyer's entry for *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* quotes both the Latin praise of wisdom (referencing the use of red ink) and the first vernacular verse that follows this praise. This shows that, in Meyer's understanding, the Latin and vernacular elements do constitute the »text« of Könemann's *Wortegarde* and that the bilingualism is therefore co-determining for its textuality. The entry is concluded by quotations from the epilogue (giving the vernacular title), the verses from which the time and place of composition emerge, and the *explicit* (again with reference to the red ink for the Latin part), in which the writer names himself. The last eight verses of the text, which Meyer considers to be the writer's verses and thus a later addition to the text, are reported, but they themselves are not quoted. By citing only the beginning and end of the author's text, the boundaries of the text are defined and recorded here for the first time.

4. Into the 20th Century

While Meyer's catalogue was meant for taking inventory of all medieval manuscripts in Göttingen, in Berlin the *Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften* initiated a plan in 1903 to establish an archive of descriptions of all German-language medieval manuscripts to counter the lack of knowledge of medieval vernacular manuscripts. In a memorandum classified as secret by Konrad Burdach, Gustav Roethe and Erich Schmidt, the lack of editions of medieval German texts from the years after 1250 was criticised, as well as the lack of knowledge of which manuscripts had been transmitted at all, making it impossible to comprehensively analyse the history of German literature and language. For this reason, it was decided that all vernacular texts, codices, and fragments should be fully catalogued in philological, codicological and literary-historical terms, and the Berlin *Handschriftenarchiv* (in short: HSA) was created alongside the edition series *Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters* (in short: DTM). Both are continued to this day at the *Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften* (short: BBAW).⁵⁶

55 Ibid.

56 Wolf, Jürgen (2007): »Hilfsmittel für die Editionspraxis: Das Handschriftenarchiv der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Handschriftencensus«, in: editio 21, pp. 152–168, here pp. 153–154.

In 1903/4 *Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung der deutschen Handschriften des Mittelalters und der frühneuhochdeutschen Zeit*⁵⁷ were published for the HSA, which were re-issued several times until 1944 and served as a template for *Richtlinien zur Handschriftenkatalogisierung der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft*, first published in 1963.⁵⁸ In addition to the shelf mark of the manuscript, the entries should include information on provenance, materiality, palaeography, size and format, page layout and decoration, binding and watermarks. A list of the relevant contents should be made, stating the leaves and citing the beginning and end of each text (*incipit* and *explicit*). Furthermore, headings, marginalia and/or other traces of users should be recorded. Shorter, previously unprinted texts with up to approximately 20 verses should be copied in full. Moreover, there are guidelines on formalities, paper quality—**gute[s], dauerhafte[s] Papier** [emphasis in original] (womöglich [...] amtliche[s] deutsche[s] Normalpapier Qualität IIa)«⁵⁹—and regulations on the use of Latin and German script and ink colour. Also, the corpus relevant for German studies is defined: It includes manuscripts up to about the year 1520 which contain vernacular texts that were considered ›literary‹ in the sense of the 19th/20th century.⁶⁰

57 BBAW, Archive of the DTM, no signature, and Archive of the BBAW, inventory PAW (1812–1945), II-VIII-16, 6–9^R. A new website of the HSA is under construction (<https://handschriftenarchiv.bbaw.de>, last access: 30.04.2025) and does not yet provide any digitised version of these documents. Currently the documents can only be accessed through the web archive of the BBAW, Online: <https://webarchive.bbaw.de/default/20211123094110/http://www.bbaw.de/forschung/dtm/HSA/Grundsaeetze-Inventarisierung.html> (last access: 30.04.2025). Further information on ›Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung‹ by Konrad Burdach and Gustav Roethe, their historical development, and a reprint ›Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung‹ of 1904 can also be found in: Ricke, Anne-Beate (2000): ›Die Inventarisierungsgrundsätze des Handschriftenarchivs der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und ihre Entwicklung‹, in: Becker, Peter Jörg et. al. (eds.): *Scrinium Berolinense. Tilo Brandis zum 65. Geburtstag*, Vol. I, Wiesbaden: Reichert, pp. 425–435, ›Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung‹ are on pp. 426–430. All information and quotes from ›Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung‹ in this paper were taken from the digitised version from 1904, accessible through BBAWs web archive.

58 Schubert, Martin J. (2005): ›Die ›Deutschen Texte des Mittelalters‹ und das ›Handschriftenarchiv‹ seit 1904‹, in: Martin J. Schubert (ed.): *Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters zwischen Handschriftennähe und Rekonstruktion*. Berliner Fachtagung 1.–3. April 2004, Tübingen: Niemeyer, pp. 297–310, here p. 298.

59 Burdach/Roethe: *Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung*, p. 4.

60 This did not include documents, minutes and business records. However, translations, edifying literature, sermons, scientific texts (e.g. law books, cookbooks) as well as letters and texts in poetic speech were included. More recent manuscripts from the period after 1520 should only be included if they contained medieval works or ›schöne Literatur: (Poesie und weltliche erzählende Dichtung)‹ (Burdach/Roethe: *Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung*, p. 1). Religious, historical and scientific prose texts were not included. Of the Latin manuscripts up to the 17th century, only those that transmit texts of (an unspecified) aesthetic standard and

A total of two descriptions of Cod. 153 were produced for the HSA: the first one by Ludwig Pfannmüller (1911)⁶¹, and the second one by Ludwig Wolff (1937)⁶². Since Wolff's description primarily provides additional information regarding watermarks, the layer structure of Cod. 153, and bibliographic references and is therefore classified as an »Ergänzung zu der Beschreibung Pfannmüllers«⁶³ by Wolff himself, I will focus on the older description.

Pfannmüller starts his description of Cod. 153 with »metadata«— shelfmark, information on the age and materiality of the manuscript (15th century paper manuscript) including a sketch of the watermark, the volume (»220 Blätter«⁶⁴), the format and a reference to the two originally independent parts. Furthermore, information on the hands, the binding, the page layout and decoration and the book binding can also be found here. Corresponding to the occasion, the vernacular texts appear prioritised over the Latin texts which Pfannmüller simply refers to as »lat. Prosastücke«⁶⁵. According to the guidelines, these information are written in German script to distinguish it from everything that was taken verbatim from the codex in Latin script. On pp. 2r and 3r, *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* is described and listed as »Konemanns Wurzgarten«⁶⁶ (Fig. 9).

were written in the German-speaking countries or by authors who also wrote in German (e.g. Konrad of Megenberg or Martin Luther) were of interest to the authors of *Grundsätze*. Here, too, religious, historical and scientific prose was only considered for the descriptions if it contained versified passages. Manuscripts in other languages are only included if they contain translations of medieval German texts; Burdach/Roethe: *Grundsätze zur Inventarisierung*, pp. 1–2.

61 Ludwig Pfannmüller (1911): »[Manuscript description of] Göttingen, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 4° Cod. Ms. theol. 153«, in: HSA of the Berlin-Brandenburger Akademie der Wissenschaften. Online: <https://handschriftenarchiv.bbaw.de/id/70034090> (last access: 30.04.2025).

62 Ludwig Wolff (1937): »[Supplementary manuscript description of] Göttingen, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 4° Cod. Ms. theol. 153«, in: HSA of the Berlin-Brandenburger Akademie der Wissenschaften. Online: <https://handschriftenarchiv.bbaw.de/id/70034090> (last access: 30.04.2025).

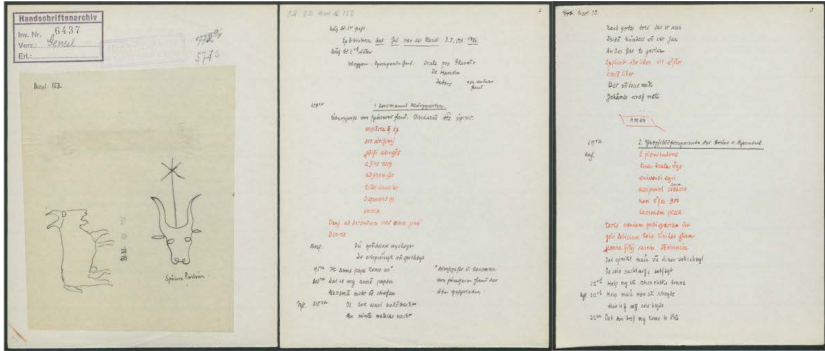
63 Wolff: [Supp. desc. of] Göttingen, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 4° Cod. Ms. theol. 153, p. 1. Due to the supplementary status of Wolff's description, his and Pfannmüller's descriptions of Cod. 153 are now accessible in a single digital file via the HSA, as one can see from the URLs referenced above.

64 Pfannmüller: [Ms. desc. of] Göttingen, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 4° Cod. Ms. theol. 153, p. 2.

65 Ibid., p. 1.

66 Ibid., p. 2.

Fig. 9: Description of the *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* by Ludwig Pfanmüller.



The heading *Viridari[um] b[ea]te [vir]ginis* is labelled as having been inserted by a later hand, as well as the mention of Könemann's name on fol. 195va. Pfanmüller records the text boundaries of *Sunte Marien Wortegarde* in accordance with the guidelines. Although he transcribes the Latin praise of wisdom at the beginning of the text diplomatically and (according to the codex) in red ink, he only marks the two vernacular verses in black ink as »Anf[ang].«⁶⁷ For him, the actual text is the German one, to which the Latin verses are subordinated as accessories. The Latin quotations, which were previously fundamental to the text's identity as a *viridarium*, are now regarded as secondary elements and assigned a subordinate status, akin to paratexts. However, it remains uncertain whether Pfanmüller also ascribes such a paratextual status to the Latin verses contained in *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*, as the description of the manuscript does not explicitly address this point. Looking at the description of the texts that follow *Sunte Marien Wortegarde*, it becomes clear that the Latin entries, which can also be found there, are treated differently: Although all vernacular texts have the interweaving of Latin and Low German elements in common, their status, their belonging to the »text«, is defined differently from one work to another; the guiding factor seems to be a direct reference of the German text to the Latin excerpt.

Pfanmüller also copies the verses in which the date and place of origin and the name of a scribe (»*Johānes screffmek*«⁶⁸) are mentioned, but the following eight verses are not quoted but only indicated by three dots within the description. The »*Amen*«⁶⁹ at the end of the text is copied again and is even framed in red like in the codex. This approach differentiates what is generally referred to as the »writer's verse« from Könemann's text and marks it as an addition. The thus constituted text is a vernacular author's text, from which the Latin material as well as additions by the writer can

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid., p. 3.

69 Ibid.

be distinguished as supplement or addendum. In this form—as a discernible early 14th century Low German poem that can be attributed to a specific author and that has been copied at some point by a scribe named Johannes and incorporated into Cod. 153 in the mid-15th century—the text will enter the literary history of German studies. On the other hand, its status as *viridarium* as a collection of Latin excerpts embellished by a poetic commentary, which responds to the theological elements of the first fascicle and which will be followed by »*fimilis argumenti ead[em]. lingua*«⁷⁰, falls into oblivion.

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70 Bruns: Catalogus Bibliothecae D. Antonii Iulii von der Hardt, p. 28.

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